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Considerations on the historic context surrounding the publications attributed to Denis & Schiffermüller

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Abstract. In the second half of the 18th century, the influential Jesuit college named Theresianum ran an educational and scientific project for working systematically on the Lepidoptera occurring in the vicinity of Vienna, Austria. The teachers of the college prepared a document under the title "Ankündung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend", with the aim of informing the ecclesiastical and secular authorities about the goal of the enterprise. On the board of the Theresianum there were several Jesuits, who later were considered authorities concerning Lepidoptera, namely: Michael Denis SJ, Sigismund Hohenwart SJ, Ludwig Mitterpacher SJ, Matthias Piller SJ, and Ignaz Schiffermüller SJ. They were acknowledged by Lepidoptera patronyms in the "Ankündung", which suggests that they may have been involved in this project. This "Ankündung" was mentioned in the book "Versuch eines Farbensystems" in 1771, which was authored by Ignaz Schiffermüller. Also from this book, it can be postulated that Ignaz Schiffermüller regarded himself as a responsible author or editor of the "Ankündung". Printing of the "Ankündung" was delayed for unspecified reasons, the dissolution of the Jesuit order in 1773 may have been one of them. Subsequently, Ignaz Schiffermüller managed to circulate a limited number of copies of the "Ankündung" in 1775, and then the same document appeared before a wider audience under the new title "Systematisches Verzeichniss der Schmetterlinge der Wienergegend" in 1776. Both these publications were at the time and ever since attributed to Michael Denis and Ignaz Schiffermüller, because some subsequent citations considered these two Jesuits as the principal authors.

Introduction

Kudrna and Belicek (2005) dedicated a long monograph to the question concerning the authorship of the books with the titles "Ankündung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend" ([Denis & Schiffermüller] 1775) and "Systematisches Verzeichniss der Schmetterlinge der Wienergegend" ([Denis & Schiffermüller] 1776). They concluded that the sole responsible author was Ignaz Schiffermüller (1727–1806), a priest of the Society of Jesus (SJ) affiliated to the Theresianum, one of the most influential schools of Imperial Austria in those times. In a response, Sattler and Tremewan (2009) argued that in the interest of historical accuracy, the work should be attributed to Michael Denis and Ignaz Schiffermüller, two Jesuits of the Theresianum, in accordance with Opinion 516 of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (Hemming 1958). A later contribution by Kudrna (2015) repeats the conclusions of the monograph, and presents some new arguments supporting of his own opinion.

Reading the prefaces ("An den Leser") of the publications attributed to Denis and Schiffermüller (1775, 1776), we had the impression that the work on the Lepidoptera in the vicinity of Vienna should have been a large educational and scientific project of the Theresianum, which involved several of the Jesuit teachers. By contemporary sources besides Schiffermüller, only Michael Denis (1729–1800) was named. Although Denis catalogued the "Systematisches Verzeichniss" under the authorship of "Schiffermüller & Denis" (see Sattler and Tremewan 2009), he never published anything else on entomology or natural history, but was a well-known person in literary circles.

From the distance of almost two and a half centuries, it is difficult to reconstruct the whole list of contributors, but there are some names which can be associated with the project of the Theresianum with certainty. The aim of the present paper is to present some considerations about who participated in the Lepidoptera project of the Theresianum, to whom the documents of the "Ankündung" and the "Systematisches Verzeichniss" can be attributed and when these documents were available.

Considerations

Authority, modesty

In the practice of the contemporary Jesuits, anonymity was unusual or even impossible. The person who entered into the society had to take full responsibility for his own activities, but always under the strictest supervision of his superior (cf. Eaglestone and Munitiz 2004). Consequently, works were always presented to lower or higher ecclesiastical boards for checking the content of a manuscript (Udías 2015). This is testified by the following works of Jesuits, cited as examples: "Insecta Musei Graecensis" (Graz 1761, authored by Nicolaus Poda SJ), "Versuch eines Farbensystems" (Wien 1771, authored by Ignaz Schiffermüller SJ), "Die Lieder Sineds des Barden" (Wien 1772, authored by Michael Denis SJ). Therefore it is certain that Ignaz Schiffermüller would have been credited as the sole author of the "Ankündung" and that would have been put on the title page without question, as it occurred for his "Versuch".

When a team of Jesuits produced a book, that was also indicated. Although it was not a general but a rare practice, there were several such cases, for example the book published in 1773 with the title "Entwurf der oekonomischen Kenntnisse, welche in dem kaiserlichen königlichen Theresianum der adelichen Jugend beygebracht werden". However, the responsibility in these cases was not anonymous, as the institute involved where Jesuits worked had to be named. In the aforementioned case, and also in the case of the "Ankündung", that was the Theresianum. The head of that Institute during the times when Schiffermüller worked was: Johann Heinrich von Kerens SJ for the period 1760–1769, and Theodor Kravina von Cronstein SJ from 1770 to the year of the Jesuit order's dissolution (1773). The "Entwurf" is catalogued under the name of Cronstein in the public library of the city Vienna (www.digital.wienbibliothek.at). Hence, theoretically, the responsible person of the "Ankündung" would have been Cronstein, who was an important person in education and science (cf. Južnič 2017).

Moreover, whenever there was a close collaboration between two authors, that was also clearly indicated. For example in the book of Piller and Mitterpacher (1783), where many Lepidoptera species were described as new. Because Piller was senior to Mitterpacher, that was expressed also in the authorship, as modesty and respect played a key role in the Society of Jesus; the senior Piller was placed first. And this was the case when Denis himself catalogued the "Ankündung" (see Sattler and Tremewan 2009). In his autobiography, Schiffermüller expressed the close relationship and

collaboration between Denis and himself (Promitzer 1990; Sattler and Tremewan 2009), but this was never expressed publicly. However, we know that it was stressed in the letter he addressed to Linnaeus (cf. Sattler 1970), and probably he wrote a similar letter to the editor of the *Jenaische Zeitungen von Gelehrten Sachen*, asking the editor for a review of the "Ankündung" (cf. Sattler 1970).

Teamwork

In the Theresianum, where Ignaz Schiffermüller worked and managed the project on Lepidoptera until the dissolution and beyond, several Jesuits were involved in teaching natural history disciplines or served as the prefect. Therefore, it is probable that they also participated in the preparation of the book. Three Jesuits are worth mentioning: Sigismund Hohenwart (1730–1820), Matthias Piller (1733–1788) and Ludwig Mitterpacher (1734–1814). Later, all of them published important items on entomology and natural history, for example: "Iter per Poseganam Sclavoniae Provinciam" (1783) and "Botanischen Reisen" (1791); and also created important natural history collections.

Sattler and Tremewan (2009) argue that the patronyms *Tinea denisella* and *T. schiffermillerella* [sic] reflect the co-authorship of Michael Denis and Ignaz Schiffermüller. In the body of the main text, we find many other patronyms, including *Tortrix pilleriana* (p. 126), *T. hohenwartiana* and *T. mitterbacheriana* [sic] (both on p. 129). This suggests that these Jesuits also had a role in the project that resulted in the manuscript. Having this knowledge, we can exclude with high certainty, that the sole author of the "Ankündung" is Ignaz Schiffermüller. It is similarly highly improbable that the work is the result of the close collaboration between Denis and Schiffermüller, because if this was the case, the book would have appeared under their names as "Schiffermüller & Denis" (as happened for Piller and Mitterpacher 1783). Evidence indicates that working on Lepidoptera was indeed an enterprise of the whole Theresianum and many of the Jesuits were involved and participated. That is why it is indicated on the title page "herausgegeben von einigen Lehrer am k. k. Theresianum" (= published by some teachers of the I. [= Imperial] and R. [Royal] Theresianum).

Responsibility

The driving force of the project in the college was certainly Schiffermüller, as shown by the fact that he took responsibility of the collection assembled in the Theresianum, which remained under his supervision until the very end of his life. The project responsibility is also manifested by the letter of Schiffermüller addressed to Carolus Linnaeus in 1775 (facsimile and translation provided by Sattler 1970). In this letter he expresses a high appreciation of his 'amici'(evidently his Jesuit brothers) who helped in the project, but only Denis was named. Anyway, it is obvious that the "Ankündung" is the result of many people, not just of two. But in that letter, there is a reference to Schiffermüller's own book "Farbensystem" (Schiffermüller 1771; reviewed in detail by "D" (Anon.) 1771). Reading the relevant part of the "Farbensystem", it can be understood that Schiffermüller considered himself as the responsible author. Although Schiffermüller used the plural form, that was the style in those times even in the case of a sole authorship (see Fig. 1).

Publication date, availability

On the basis of what was written in the "Versuch", it is possible to suppose that at least one part of the manuscript of the "Ankündung" was ready for publication in 1771. It seems that none

I. Abſchnitt.

Beweggründe und Endzweck des gegenwärtigen Unternehmens.

I. §.

Wir haben ſchon anderswo (*) erkläret, was uns zu gegenwärtigem Unternehmen vorzüglich bewogen habe, die Beſchwerniß, welche nach ihrem Geſtändniſſe, ſo viele Liebhaber der Naturkunde, und wir ſelbſten fühlten, die bey den Schmetterlingen und andern dergleichen Thierchen, oder auch in den übrigen Reichen der Natur vorkommenden Farben verſtändlich zu beſchreiben. Nicht wenige Naturforſcher äußerten ſchon lange den Wunſch, daß bey itzigen der Naturwiſſenſchaft ſo günſtigen Zeiten auch hierinn ein Mittel möchte getroffen, und die wankenden Benennungen der Farben auf ſolche Art beſtimmet werden, daß unſere Begriffe davon allgemein und einförmig würden.

Aufmerkſame Augen auf alle Züge der ſchildernden Natur, ſonderbare Hochſchätzung der Malerey und einiger mit dieſer verwandten Künſte, erworbene Bekanntſchaft mit Künſtlern von dieſer Art, und daher erhaltene Erläuterungen deſſen, was uns von Farben in Büchern aufgeſtoſſen, dann auch eigene Verſuche, und dergleichen andere Umſtände haben uns vielleicht doch zu viel geſchmeichelt, da ſie uns das Vertrauen einflößten, dieſe Sache in den von unſern Amtspflichten freyen Stunden zu unternehmen (**).

(*) Ankündung eines ſyſtemat. Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend. V. Abſchn. 3. u. 4. §. Man behält wegen der Einförmigkeit mit jenem Werke auch die Art in der mehrern Zahl zu ſchreiben bey.

(**) Wir müßen diejenigen, die in dieſem Felde ſchon, um zur Beförderung der Naturlehre etwas beyzutragen, gearbeitet haben, nicht mit Stillſchweigen übergehen. Hr. Bergrath Scopoli ſchlägt in ſeiner Entomologia Carniolica (Ex-

Figure 1. Page 1 of the "Versuch eines Farbensystems" (Schiffermüller, 1771; with texts in red frames indicating authorship (top) and testifying the availability of the book "Ankündung" ([Denis and Schiffermüller], 1775). The text in the top frame: "Wir haben schon anderswo (*) erkläret…" = We have already explained elsewhere (*)... The second sentence of the text in the lower frame: "Man behält wegen der Einförmigkeit mit jenem Werke auch die Art in der mehrern Zahl zu schreiben bey." = We retain for the sake of uniformity with that work the manner of writing in the plural.

of the scholars involved in the identification of the authorship and the publication date of the "Ankündung" or the "Systematisches Verzeichniss" had the opportunity to read the book "Versuch eines Farbensystems" or simply its importance had been overlooked. This latter book is authored by Ignaz Schiffermüller, and it is not an anonymous publication as indicated by Kudrna (2015). This has been printed at least twice: (1) the copy kept in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (Munich, Germany) bears the date 1771; and (2) the copy available electronically via openlibrary.org bears the date 1772.

Schiffermüller must have considered the "Ankündung" as published or it was already in the status of a clear manuscript ready to be submitted to the printer in 1771. This is suggested by the closing inscription "Geschrieben am k. k. Theresiano den 16. Märzen 1771" of the part "An den Leser" indicates on the page 4. But there is no evidence supporting this scenario. A more plausible explanation is that the first part of the "Ankündung" indeed existed as a finished manuscript ready for submission to the printer. That is why Schiffermüller is able to cite entries of the "Ankündung" in 1771 as "V. Abschn. 3. un 4 §." but without pagination (pp 37–39 in the "Ankündung"). These parts discussed Lepidoptera wing colouration in the "Ankündung", but the "Versuch" was not mentioned. It is worth remarking that Schiffermüller used the same nomenclature of colours that he had in the "Versuch", which underlines that the parts of the "Ankündung" dealing with wing colours had been completed with certainty.

Hitherto, there is no copy known to be extant of the "Ankündung" with the publication year 1771 or 1772. Most probably, one does not exist. The manuscript could have been printed only after 1773, as the content of the "Nachtrag" suggests. The very rare print of 1775 has a wood block title page. The reprints dated 1776 show a lithographed title page with a different carving and different titles (cf. [Denis & Schiffermüller] 1775 and 1776; Sattler 1970; Kudrna and Belicek 2005). It is certain that the inner pages of these works were printed in the same run, but there is no evidence that any of them was published before 1775, especially if we take as evidence that on page 235, a book published in 1773 is referred to (Gleditsch 1773).

Closing remarks

Probably the following remarks reflect the real history of the "Ankündung" and the "Systematisches Verzeichniss": Some of the first parts ("Abtheilungen") of the "Ankündung" had already been prepared for print in 1771, or might even have been printed. Because of unknown reasons, but possibly due to the dissolution of the Society of Jesus in 1773, the printing could not be completed. Two years after the dissolution, Schiffermüller was able to invest more energy in the project, supplement it and finally put the manuscript in print. He was the one who sent copies to colleagues and friends (amongst them was Linnaeus), with a title page indicating the year of issue as 1775. Later it became evident to him that the project "Systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend" in the Theresianum could not be continued.

Nevertheless, the work "Systematisches Verzeichniss" was born. Therefore the title, the title page and the frontispieces were all changed. This 1776 print became distributed by contemporary booksellers, reviewed by various authors (see Sattler and Tremewan 2009), and served as the reprint edition issued by Johann Illiger in 1801.

The "early Ankündung" that might have been printed with the publication date 31st December, 1771, is not extant on the basis of available evidence. What we know is that the "Ankündung" was published sometime before the date 11th September 1775, with the "Nachtrag", as the letter

of Schiffermüller addressed to Linnaeus indicates. This has no influence on Opinion 516 of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, which regulates the publication dates of various classical works of lepidopterology. Therefore, all these considerations that we presented above have historical interest only, without any influence concerning nomenclatural issues. Reading the preface of the "Ankündung" (and the "Systematisches Verzeichniss"), there is no question that the book was produced by a team of Jesuit teachers, and was not authored by a sole person or by two Jesuits and was based on the collections of many. This is supported by the evidence offered via the numerous patronyms proposed in the book and references to collections of various teachers and students. The most remarkable one was Mathias Piller SJ (1733–1788), whose collection was referred many times and got also a patronym in "*Tortrix pilleriana*".

The authorship of the "Ankündung" is not a crucial question, but the acceptance of Schiffermüller as the responsible editor would be more accurate, reflecting the real history of this influential document of lepidopterology. The autobiographies and biographies of Schiffermüller and of Denis have never been examined by a lepidopterist (cf. Hofmann-Wellenhof 1881; Speta 2003), yet they may provide detail on the question of contributors to the Ankündung and Systematisches Verzeichniss.

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